

Summaries of Publications

Slavica Stojan, Anica Bošković. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1999.

This study is concerned with the life and work of Anica Bošković (1714-1804), Croat authoress, who was the first and, up to the nineteenth century, the only woman in Croatia who had the satisfaction of seeing her literary achievements in print. Her works, relatively few, consist of reflexive lyric poetry on religious and liturgical subjects, and a short epistolary correspondence bearing all the characteristics of literary work.

Anica's mature years were marked by the powerful influence of the Jesuit community in Dubrovnik. The Jesuits busily engaged in all the aspects of social life. Being founded in 1684, the Jesuit College was a place where youth, in the pursuit of knowledge, could familiarize themselves with Latin, and acquire excellent skill in both reading and writing. This concern for Latin did in no way affect the interest for the Croatian language. On the contrary, more than ever before was the mother tongue studied and ardently employed. It was in the eighteenth century that a great number of works of old Croat Dubrovnik writers was being transcribed. There was a growing interest for the literature written in Croatian, even by those authors who were characterized as Latinists. Despite the fact that the first Dubrovnik printing-house was opened in 1783, almost at the close of the century, the majority of the literary achievements of the local Ragusan writers circulated primarily in transcript.

Anica Bošković experienced a profound identification with Jesuitism, and she took every opportunity to express her devotion to the teaching. She was fully aware of the principles put before the Society of Jesus and

felt them as a part of her own self. She deeply sympathized with the Jesuits after the abolishment of their order. She identified with the painful humiliation experienced by the prosecuted former members of the Jesuit community. Low and down-hearted, Anica found comfort in writing letters to brother Ruder, and in her verses.

Anica's literary and artistic leanings came to view with her formal education at St. Catherine's convent, where her elder sister was a nun. Thereafter, Anica was also tutored by her elder brothers, most of all by her excessively gifted brother Ruder, who was three years older, her closest companion and paragon for life. Anica's sojourn was marked by pious prayers, homilies, frequent confessions and discourses with the priest, reading religious works in an attempt to model after the virtuous lives of Catholic saints. Partly the result of her family background, an actively Christian household dominated by the religious but rational figure of her mother, a family upbringing which taught her how to open her heart and soul to God and religious meditation, her piety and rich spiritual life could also be credited to the popular preachers of the time. Apart from the classical authors, Anica's most favorite works were those of Kašić, who most directly and affectionately addressed the female readers in Croatian, always with moral advice and support.

Although being marked by the Enlightenment, the eighteenth century did not look upon the education of women with sympathy. By reading religious works, the Ragusan ladies and young girls broadened their cultural horizons and learning. It is interesting to note that this small cultural setting, as Dubrovnik was in the eighteenth century, saw several authoresses. At a time when erotic literature flourished in France, when

sensuality was openly treated by French illustrators, etchers, and painters, and which eventually culminate in the theoretical and practical teaching of the most exaggerated and vicious immorality of the French philosopher Françoise de Sade, Dubrovnik was the home of devotional poetesses who indulged in translating and writing verse based upon Biblical motifs mirrored in the everyday life of Dubrovnik. One of these was Anica Bošković who addressed young women in her affectionate versified story *Razgovor pastirski* /Shepherd's Discourse upon the Birth of the Lord/. Religious and moral in its themes, it is strewn with Anica's observations and personal experiences, with a stress on the religious and moral intonation which was at the same time a vehicle and central theme of the story.

Anica Bošković was the first in Croatian literature to devote most of her poetry to the Infant, in whom she foresaw the future Saviour. *Bambin*, as Anica refers to the child of God, has all the characteristics of a small human being, and can, therefore, be regarded as a child. She is immensely drawn to the children's world, the world of innocence and chastity, which she sees as the world of peace and happiness. She tells of the vulnerability of this world in her own particular way, determined by the historical moment and the breadth of her learning. She considered the pastoral approach to be the most adequate mode of literary expression for her. Pastorals are psychologically rooted in an accentuated yearning for innocence and happiness. Therefore, shepherds and shepherdesses, regardless of the fact that they are not martyrs in the Christian sense of the word, are the witnesses of Christianity. Thus, in the very introduction of the birth of Christ in Anica's versified story, He appears as the ideal of perfection, the Saviour and Redeemer, and

the Resurrection itself provides the true meaning to all the preceding events, including the birth of the Lord, while the idea of Christ maintains a suggestive pastoral attraction. The motifs of the Good Shepherd as well as the Paschal lamb bear pastoral elements in themselves, which is also the case with some other biblical motifs from the Old and New Testaments. Pastoral elements are primarily manifested in shepherds, dwellers of simple and rustic environments, whom Anica Bošković, in line with a number of old Croat writers, sees as a domestic setting.

Pastoral life conveys the idea of tranquility. Thus, the poetess tells of the peace which the human soul finds in its praise of God. It is the tranquility enjoyed both by heaven and earth, dusk and dawn, well, meadow, and wood. It is a seclusion to nature and solitude, the only place where contemplation is possible. In her neglect of the corporal, Anica Bošković lifts the soul thus, so as to be absorbed in the consciousness of God. She readily accepts the teaching of suffering, one of the forms of bodily despise. This is the starting-point of religious meditation, which, through spiritual consideration, reflects her propensity towards contemplation, her view of things. This form of meditation is pious and emotional, heart-centred. It could be identified with prayer, for the experience of prayer occupies the central place in Anica's spiritual being, an experience next to mystical. It represents a step towards vision, the latter being the basis of baroque experience. From a state of ecstasy, the poetess awakens with a new hope for lively optimism and joy. Employing her meditative abilities, Anica dilligently elaborates the chosen religious subject. Therefore, *Razgovor pastirski* could be viewed as a prayer, inspiring and stimulating, in defence of spirituality and modesty, in search of God,

and opposing the powerful impacts of the exterior.

In the best manner of the Croatian literary tradition, Anica Bošković has conceived a preface to her Christmas pastoral *Razgovor pastirski vrhu porođenja Gospodinova*, in which she expressed, with all due respect, her deepest affection and feelings towards her two elder brothers to whom she dedicated the work. The preface reveals Anica's inspirations, content and poetic message, all her subject interests and perceptions, her attitude towards the basic issues of life, and her principles, after having initially adverted to her incompetence for the work already completed. In her opinion, literary gift is an act of grace, so she did everything in her power not to lose the confidence with which she was graced. The literary task Anica put before herself she experienced without hardship and complexity, but contrarily, as "a rest from other work", leisure, and as a perfect way to bridge "the worlds of emptiness".

Being fully aware of her poetic dignity, Anica displays remarkable understanding of the poetic word. She pursues the task and nature of the poetic work, modelling herself as a writer. Her work cannot singularly be viewed as poetic, but also rhetorical, for she continuously draws the attention of her readers to the basic religious, moral, and didactic mainstreams of her work. Anica Bošković clearly states that there can be no language without literature, and vice versa. Her work displays her innermost sensitivity for the beauty and rhythm of the language, as the latter increasingly occupied her. Anica's immense poetic stimulus provided foundations for her translations, too. The creative work of finding equivalent words in her mother language attracted her as much as composing her own original verse.

Razgovor pastirski follows the tradition

of Croatian pastoral literature. The names of the characters stem from a variety of domestic flora, metaphorically representing the basic human virtues: Violet (Ljubica) - modesty and beauty, Daisy (Tratorka) - simplicity of a wild-flower, Laurel (Lovorko) - the dignity of old age and chastity. Psychological stability is equally present in all the three characters. Apart from deep faith and profound piety, the three convey a striking awareness of what is good. The world of youth presented in *Razgovor pastirski* is, however, viewed from the adult perspective. That is the reason why Ljubica and Tratorka can hardly be experienced as girls. Moreover, Anica envisages rural life from the urban perspective, failing to discern or even sense the underlying negative aspects of pastoral society. In this, however, Anica is no different from the other authors of eighteenth-century Christmas pastorals in Dubrovnik.

The composition of Anica's epic is characterized by a rococo attitude towards the central plot, which eventually becomes of minor importance. Her poetic work is to a greater extent composed of miniature epigrammatic forms even then when the former are used to construct more extensive poems. *Razgovor pastirski*, told by Ljubica, Tratorka and Lovorko, thus functions as a wreath or series of short poems and vignettes mostly concerned with the themes of spiritual tranquility, innocence, beauty and virtue, humility, and the greatness of God. The birth of Jesus, supposedly the central theme, is treated in the closing part of the epic. Well-aware of this fact, various authors of anthologies have presented parts of Anica's epic as individual poems. Such examples can be found in books of Croatian poetry from Šenoa to contemporary collections.

The poetic form of *Razgovor pastirski* is

characterized by a baroque experience. In addition to the exterior world there exists another world in Anica's soul. Therefore, the author employs allegory. Although simple in expression, the poetry of Anica Bošković embraces other rhetoric means characteristic of baroque narratives, such as antithesis, apostrophe, metaphor, iteration, and enumeration. She reaches for antithesis when there is an evident contrast as in life and death, day and night, etc. She models them in a traditional manner, namely, in their literal meaning, expressing the contrast of ideas and motifs they convey, and at the same time contributing to the lively style, richness, and overall appeal of her poetic expression.

The metaphoric language of Anica Bošković is conventional in its nature, and biblical in its character. Anica herself felt familiar with the proverbial mode of expression, as she increasingly used it in both her letters and poetry. Her phraseology generates from diverse sources. She employs colloquial phrases as a device to express church rhetorics, as well as phraseology characteristic of popular poetry, which was typical of baroque writers such as Gundulić, Bunić, and Ignjat Đurđević, with whose work Anica was well acquainted. Though her style was primarily determined as baroque, features characteristic of other periods can be traced in her work, too. The excessive use of the diminutive, a hallmark of rococo literature, was the result of the seventeenth-century tendency to reshape the supernatural down to worldly needs. Anica Bošković's use of diminutive forms introduces the reader into the world of goodness, nobility, and love that she so deeply promoted. These particular forms have emphasized the transparency of Anica's female experience which is easily observed in her narrative work.

Anica was also familiar with the Passion

theme, which was of particular interest to the Croatian writers of eighteenth-century Dubrovnik. In her poem entitled *Razgovor na križu s Isukrstom propetijem* /Discourse on the Cross with the Crucified Christ/ the poetess laments over the scene of the crucified Christ. She elaborates her ecstatic love towards Christ, placing before herself a special task: how to depict this extraordinary relationship of immeasurable love of God and his greatness, and how to approach him. Like her literary predecessors, Anica draws her phrases and references from the Renaissance poets, who dedicated their amorous verses, however, to more earthly objects. This is the language of Petrarchan love lyrics, where the words soul, heart, love, and their metaphors flame, burn, desire etc. play the major part. The experience of commitment to God through love seems to be more impressive if partly expressed by devices of earthly love. Lyrical passages are embellished with rhetorical devices and those of narrative aesthetics. In addition, Anica not only borrowed themes from the Renaissance tradition, but also baroque Platonic love in order to capture this heaven-sent love, immeasurable by human standards.

Anica's reflexive and religious inner self quests for the complex theme of the merciful Heart of Jesus as she constantly re-examines her consciousness of how much patience and constraint a man can have when tempted by the earthly delights. The poetess unfolds a variety of motifs exhibiting thus her religious feelings, interwoven with the philosophical and theological questions of God's mercy and his almightiness.

Anica is persistently occupied with the passing of life, which is one of the basic Jesuit tenets treating the problem of one's being blinded by worldly emptiness instead of eternal goodness. Anica's contempt for

the worldly, however, is not merely a conventional lamentation over the passing of earthly things, but a true experience and witnessing.

The baroque elements elucidate her poetic work with a mystical and moving feeling of devotion. Her poetic motifs often correspond to those of her Jesuit literary contemporaries, especially those inspired by the forms of devotion which they expressed in a conventional manner. However, the influence of Ivan Gundulić, Đivo Bunić, or Ignjat Đurđević is quite evident in Anica's poetry. Driven by an urge to express her feelings and thoughts concerning God, her family, and home town, Anica reveals her innermost intimacy in her poems.

Anica's letters to her brother Ruder represent a specific chronicle of their family life. From her masterly wrought psychological portraits of her mother, brothers, friends, and relatives we may learn a great deal about Anica. The letters also contain references of meetings and events she experienced, making them valuable records of her time, as well as of her contemporaries. Anica's letters to Ruder provide the best and most reliable source for the study of her character and talent, as they contain far more emotional and literary elements than her poems. Anica possesses a magnificent narrative gift. Her story is interesting, lively, and inventive, her language being picturesque, scattered with witty remarks, colloquial phrases, proverbial constructions, and metaphors. One cannot but feel her joy in narration. Anica's optimistic and humorous view of life and the world is characteristic of her letters. Rooted in everyday life, her humour is direct. Hearty and warm laughter is part of Anica's character. In her poetry, however, all is theologically far too serious, since there Anica restrains her sense of humour, playful expression, and

spontaneity. The letters to her brother disclose her delight in laughter and skill in character drawing. Besides the treatment of people, she makes shrewd comments on unremarkable situations of everyday life.

In spite of the fact that only about ten of Anica's letters have survived to this day, they undoubtedly reveal their author as a learned and gifted one, aware of the patriotic character of her poetic mission.

Anica lived to see the printing of *Razgovor pastirski vrhu porođenja Gospodinova*, which was subsequently published twice in the 19th century, proving that it still attracted readers a hundred years after its creation. Combining a religious and didactic message in the guise of the pastoral world addressed to young girls, Anica's poetic voice bespeaks the outlines of her womanly experience. However, it has been reduced to fragments, reminiscences, and allusions. She longs for the world of heavenly harmony, goodness and grace, void of material problems and corporeal lust.

In Croatian literary history, Anica Bošković should undoubtedly be recognized as a pioneer among authoresses, despite the fact that years and centuries before her there existed other writers. Her poetic work, however, is not to be regarded as ephemeral, for literature was her basic preoccupation. Anica reveals the purpose and nature of her poetic skill, defining herself as a writer. As her position in the history of literature has often been disregarded by a number of literary historians in the pursuit of aesthetic analysis rather than the voices of reality and rational truth, Anica's literary work, neither extensive nor covering a vast poetic content, reflects the exceptional view of her poetic world, her faith and her fantasy, hardly acceptable from the current perspective. Her literary work is built on religious and moral

foundations. The religious aspect, however, does not interfere nor dissipate its artistic or aesthetic value. Deeply implanted devotion is simply part of her being.

Stjepan Ćosić, *Dubrovnik after the Fall of the Republic (1808-1848) (History of Dubrovnik 1808-1848: Discontinuity and Transformation)*. Dubrovnik: Zavod za povijesne znanosti HAZU, 1999.

The first half of the nineteenth century is characterized by radical social changes which marked the beginning of the history of modern bourgeois era. After exhausting Napoleonic campaigns, and despite restoration and absolutism, much of Europe witnessed the strengthening of the basic democratic tenets founded on legal equality and the proclaimed goals of the bourgeois society. Democratic processes established during the revolutionary movements of the '20s and '30s, culminated in the general European unrest of 1848. Technological and industrial revolution, population explosion, and the growth of agricultural industry contributed to social changes, accompanied by a major shift in political theory and practice. The principle of monarchistic legality was gradually replaced by various forms of conservatism. On the other hand, all the political streams striving toward reforms were founded on the liberal political philosophy. Lastly, the development and strengthening of national consciousness in the liberal context, demanded, with its integrational power, abolition of territorial and ethnic dismemberment, constructing at the same time the framework of European power struggles.

Dubrovnik area, and Croatian lands in general, did not experience these processes as intensely as did most of the Western Eu-

rope. Nevertheless, the territory of the former Republic did witness reverberating effects of the global events, but in social terms, Dubrovnik was not yet ready to undergo internal political reforms. The overall European climate of change crept to the borders of the Republic, followed by repercussions of the Napoleonic wars. Rapid change of political and economic structure as well as the discontinuity in development resulting from these processes, engendered the loss of political autonomy, economic breakdown, and the dissolution of the old social structure, demarkating thus fundamentally new guidelines of Dubrovnik's history in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Periodization of Dubrovnik's history following the fall of the Republic is conditioned by a series of institutional and political changes. The 1808 French abolition of the Dubrovnik Republic should be recognized as a historical turning-point. Formally speaking, it marked the disappearance of a social, political, and economic structure which kept struggling over the centuries for its maintenance in the traditional world of the Ancien regime. Dramatical period of French administration experienced two phases. The first, 1808-1809, when new government was established, even though the fate of the abolished Republic still seemed uncertain. The second phase, from 1809 to 1814, saw the annexation of the Dubrovnik area, and its becoming part of the Illyrian provinces. It was then, for the first time, that basic tenets of the bourgeois legislative were being partially introduced, which formally marked the discontinuity of the ancient aristocratic regime. This process was underlied by the complete economic paralysis resulting from the devastation of the commercial fleet, the chief element of Ragusan economic power. The profound social schism provoked the